

development, and hazard mitigation. We must radically approach our agriculture and deforestation to stop making it worse.

I have introduced legislation that would make it illegal for products that were grown on illegally deforested land—palm oil, soy, and cocoa—from entering the stream of commerce, and having a border adjustment tax will make a big difference to stop people from exporting their carbon pollution.

Above all, we must mitigate climate change with an emphasis on equity, and we should harness the forces of nature to heal the land and reduce carbon. It is more effective, and it is cheaper. Instead of putting off much-needed policy changes, this will only delay the inevitable and make the adjustments more difficult as we reap the consequences of decades of inaction and denial.

Yes, it is going to take massive investments. But we are already making massive investments. The biggest infrastructure program now, the Federal Government, is paying to clean up after natural disasters. We should take some of that revenue stream and instead invest in mitigation and recovery that will make us stronger going forward.

Over the past months, I have worked to try and assemble my thoughts, talking to experts and thinking about what would make a difference. I have a little report I call "From Ruin to Resilience: Protecting Communities and Preventing Disaster." I look forward to discussing this with my colleagues to understand their issues and things that we can do together on a scale that this challenge demands.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to progress and discussion in Glasgow, but, more importantly, I look forward to progress and action here in Congress and in our communities. Our future and our children's future depend on it.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION MIGRANT PAYMENT PROPOSAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, my fellow Hoosier, I rise today to expose an outrageous scheme by the Biden administration to pay out hundreds of thousands of dollars to migrants who have violated our laws by illegally crossing our southern border.

Right now, there is already a national security, humanitarian, and public health crisis on the southern border. Every neighborhood in America, including mine in Indiana, is facing the devastating consequences of this crisis as illicit drugs come across the porous border and wreak havoc in our communities through more violence and drug overdoses.

Instead of protecting our country by securing the border, President Biden wants law-abiding American taxpayers to pay illegal migrants, whom people

know and we know broke the laws, a ridiculous sum of money. This decision will do nothing more than encourage human trafficking and drug smuggling.

The administration's border policies are downright inhumane and will continue to incentivize migrants to make the dangerous journey to reach our border.

This radical proposal should be abandoned immediately. It will not only exacerbate this crisis but it will also be put on the taxpayers' dime.

As inflation skyrockets under the Biden administration's Big Government giveaways, working families are struggling right now to pay for everyday necessities. Small businesses are struggling with supply chain and workforce shortages.

While Americans face these obstacles, President Biden has decided that rewarding people who break our laws is more important than fighting inflation, securing our border, or ensuring that we have the necessary energy to heat our homes this winter.

This is Big Government insanity at its worst, and I wholeheartedly reject it.

HOUSING IS A BASIC RIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of millions of individuals across our country who rely on public housing to keep a roof over their heads and for millions who need access to safe, stable, and affordable housing across our country.

Housing is a basic right and the foundation on which we build our lives and our families, and though it is clear that this is essential, far too many Americans struggle to keep a safe roof over their heads. In fact, homelessness is now at epidemic levels across our country. Particularly in our urban cities, families are homeless. Children, women, seniors, and veterans are homeless.

When we speak of the Build Back Better program and our agenda, we speak of introducing the importance of prioritizing the most at-risk communities. This is whom we are focusing on in the Build Back Better agenda, the most at-risk communities in our country. We speak of equitable access to the basic needs of the American people. That is what we speak about when we speak about Build Back Better.

We have included provisions that ensure children in need have access to free school lunches. We have worked to expand Medicare benefits for seniors. We have fought to include and boost the child tax credit, which will provide families with much-needed financial health, lifting children, Mr. Speaker, out of poverty. We have included historic provisions that will be better for our Nation for years to come.

But today, Mr. Speaker, I want to focus on the significant investments

the Build Back Better Act secures for public and affordable housing needs.

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The Build Back Better Act will make the single largest, most comprehensive investment in affordable housing in our entire history. Over \$150 billion for housing is an enormous investment toward solving our pressing housing challenges and needs across the country.

Importantly, this bill includes billions to expand rental assistance, \$24 billion for new housing vouchers, and as we know, Mr. Speaker, many people are backed up on their rent. But in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, \$65 billion to address public housing repair backlog for 2.5 million residents, a significant resource for the National Housing Trust Fund to build and preserve thousands of homes for low-income families who are disproportionately people of color.

This is a major investment, an unprecedented investment in housing in my district, which has the largest stock in the New York City Housing Authority of public housing, and it has the highest number of rent-stabilized apartments, and the city of New York will benefit greatly.

Due to the COVID-19 global crisis, we are on the brink of a housing crisis, Mr. Speaker, an eviction tsunami, and up to 40 million people in America are at risk of being displaced. This crisis is here, and we want to act on it right now. It will take generations for our Nation to recover.

Plus, we are now experiencing a shortage of 7 million affordable homes for working-class and low-income families nationwide. For every 10 households in need, Mr. Speaker, there are fewer than four affordable, available homes. Not a single city, State, or district, has enough housing to meet these dire demands. And even when housing is available, it may not necessarily mean that housing is safe.

My district has the largest concentration of public housing and it has, as I said earlier, the highest number of rent-stabilized apartments in New York City. Yet, they lack the critical resources needed to create habitable living. This is a great investment, Mr. Speaker. The Build Back Better program is an immense investment in housing.

HONORING JOHN ONDRASIK OF FIVE FOR FIGHTING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an individual I recently had the pleasure of having a conversation with, a singer-songwriter who, more importantly, is a tremendous supporter of our troops, John Ondrasik of Five for Fighting.

John started Five for Fighting in 1995, and shortly thereafter rose to

fame after releasing the Grammy-nominated ballad "Superman". While written and released well before 9/11, "Superman" became something of an anthem during the tough days following 9/11.

As our Nation came together as one, "Superman" struck a chord with the survivors and families of those we lost on that terrible day, as well as our troops serving around the world. And its lyrics resonated with people and comforted those who needed it the most.

Mr. Speaker, since then, John has been deeply involved with our troops. He has performed at dozens of USO shows for our servicemembers overseas and also works with several veteran-oriented charities. John has spent the past two decades writing deeply personal songs that include social messages that make an emotional connection and invoke the human spirit.

Some of these songs are included on the "CD for the Troops" project which is a collection of 13 songs from top artists, including John's, that was compiled specially for U.S. military members.

Since 2007, John has distributed over 1 million copies of "CD for the Troops" to servicemembers and their families around the world as a way of thanking them for the sacrifices that they have made and continue to make.

John's support of the U.S. Armed Forces is unwavering and, like many of us, when he saw the devastating images coming out of Afghanistan during the onset of the U.S. withdrawal in August, he was horrified. Terrified mothers were throwing their babies over barbed wire fences and men were clinging on to military aircraft as they lifted off, all in an attempt to flee the Taliban. How could this be happening?

John then did what many musicians in pain do. He sat at his piano and he wrote a song. He penned "Blood on My Hands" which is a song that mourns the Americans who died and the ones who were left behind in Afghanistan due to the failures of the administration. "Blood on My Hands" encapsulates the emotions that I and many Americans felt following the terrorist attacks in Kabul that killed 13 U.S. servicemembers and dozens of Afghani allies. Similar to "Superman's" effect on people post-9/11, "Blood on My Hands" went viral and quickly became an anthem for veterans and servicemembers in the wake of the deadly attacks in Kabul.

Mr. Speaker, many people cautioned John not to release the song. Still, he kept coming back to the idea that this song sent an important moral message about the disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan. John says of "Blood on My Hands": "It's not a political song. It is a moral message about promises that we made to people there, that we promised to protect, that we left there. We broke our promise. It's about accountability and admitting when you make mistakes because that's how you

can rectify them and learn not to do them again."

Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more with this sentiment. What happened to no person left behind? We put American citizens, SIV holders, and Afghan allies' lives at risk. The United States of America and this administration broke that promise to these people. The administration's decisions surrounding the withdrawal will go down, I believe, as one of the worst foreign policy decisions in American history. As a result, American lives were needlessly lost.

It is time our leaders reflect on the mistakes that were made and take accountability for failures so that we can do better for the American people and our allies in the future.

Mr. Speaker, John's work is evidence of the power that music holds. It brings people from different corners of the world together. It transcends time, and I am confident that John's song, "Blood on My Hands", will do just that.

We will never forget 9/11 and, in the same vein, we can never forget the heroes who fought in the subsequent 20-year war in Afghanistan. Thanks to brave storytellers like John Ondrasik, we won't forget these heroes.

Mr. Speaker, John is a true patriot, and I applaud and admire his courage to stand up for what he believes in, and even more so, demand accountability from our Nation's leaders.

LINCOLN BEACH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CARTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, let me paint a picture. It is the east side of New Orleans in 1959. A Black man at a swimming pool jumps off the high dive, arched in the sky. Fellow swimmers and passersby watch him from the shade of a palm tree. A Ferris wheel turns at the amusement park, and families picnic on the sandy shore of Lake Pontchartrain.

That is what Lincoln Beach was like in its heyday: a beach, amusement park, performance area, and pool for the Black community of New Orleans who were not allowed at the all-White swimming pools in the area.

Growing up, my community had fond memories of Lincoln Beach, as it was in the process of shutting down after courts decreed a racial nondiscrimination policy for private facilities on public lands, desegregating the all-White pools.

Since its closure in the sixties, Lincoln Beach has fallen into decline. It was a site for picnics and outings. Without any maintenance, and over the decades, mountains of debris have piled up. This historic site, where so many Black kids and families built communities in New Orleans East, was fenced off and forgotten to many, but not to everyone.

During COVID-19, some inspiring local activists and community mem-

bers including Sage, Reggie, and Bliss, took it upon themselves to take the first steps toward reopening historic Lincoln Beach. They got into some good trouble and cleaned up the beach all by themselves, spending their own resources, time, energy, and money.

All on their own time, their own dime, they removed hundreds of bags of garbage and debris. About 3 tons of refuse was removed by these good-doing volunteers. After Hurricane Ida, they are facing some setbacks once again with flooding that floated the more than a year's worth of trash collection away. However, these committed activists are already back to work, cleaning up the beach and trying to remove obstacles to the future of what can be a revitalized, renewed Lincoln Beach.

After Hurricane Katrina, the primarily Black community of New Orleans East repopulated essentially at the same rate as the city of New Orleans, but businesses did not come back at the same strength. Many of the major commercial areas are full of vacant businesses in this thriving, rich, strong community of New Orleans East. The once-popular mall was razed instead of being rebuilt.

In 2019, a report said that 19 percent of the homes are vacant. Reopening a beautiful beach on the shores of Lake Pontchartrain could be a catalyst that will attract a renaissance of economic development in a community that has historically been underserved and should have equitable investments.

One of the most important things a Member of Congress can do is to fight for allocations to fund projects for development to improve the lives of the constituents in a particular area, like New Orleans East. This is an equity issue. This is a racial issue. This is an issue of economic development. This is an environmental issue and a recreation issue.

Lincoln Beach has a rich history, important cultural significance, and a huge potential for the future of this great community. I support the efforts of the city of New Orleans to direct RESTORE Act funds toward the project and today, I reaffirm my commitment to support the renewal of Lincoln Beach in any way possible from Congress, State, and local resources.

I came to Congress to fight for the people of the Second Congressional District, to fight for good jobs, healthy communities, equity and opportunities. One way to achieve this fight is for us to revitalize New Orleans East and to bring Lincoln Beach back to its full luster and beauty for the community to enjoy, to use as a catalyst for further economic development, to show what revitalization and community efforts, joining with Federal, local, and State resources, can do.

We can and we will do better. The people of New Orleans, the people of Louisiana certainly deserve it, and we will fight to continue to bring those resources to bear.